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NEWS — EVENTS

# Winchester High School fall play ‘Check Please’ to be performed this weekend

NEIL ZOLOT | CORRESPONDENT

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Winchester High School will perform ‘Check Please’ by Jonathan Rand on Nov. 16 and Nov. 17. COURTESY PHOTO

It’s that time of year again when Winchester High School is putti
fall play.

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“Check Please” by Jonathan Rand will be performed on Saturday, Nov. 16 at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, Nov. 17 at 2 p.m. in the Winchester High School auditorium, 70 Skillings Road. Tickets are $10 for students and $15 for the general public, check or cash at the door.

The show will consist of three one act plays by Rand — the original “Check Please” and its sequels “Check Please: Take 2” and “Check Please: Take 3.” Each runs around 30 minutes in length.

The plays are comic takes on dating based on the characters of Guy and Girl, in a series of sketches or blackouts of various blind dates. Along the way, they meet a bigamist, a pirate, a psychic and all other sorts of oddballs.

“Check Please” has become a staple of WHS’ Curtain and Cue Club as well as other student productions and community theatre because it is relatively easy to produce.

Drama Club advisor Valentina Cella, who also teaches Italian, picked the play partly for that reason.

“Kids are involved in deciding what to stage, but they didn’t have one ready,” she said. “I chose ‘Check Please’ because we needed to pull something together fast and it sounded like something we could tackle.”

The play also fit the bill for a funny, good-natured production that Cella thought most people would enjoy.

“I like things that are family friendly,” she said. “It’s a public school and we want to make sure everyone feels welcome.”

Stella Baker, one of four student directors, agreed.

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“There is something for everyone in the audience,” she said. “I like the variety of characters and jokes.”

“There are plenty of characters to make you laugh,” student director James Lanfear added.

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Cella also likes the plays because the short scenes with different characters allow more actors to participate. She didn’t want to have too many people, however, so actors cast could gain stage experience and build up a rhythm in the play.

Some in the cast of 13 will play multiple roles.

Cella also spoke directly with Rand about how to split the three acts into a two-part presentation, with an intermission. Unusually, he licenses out the play himself and was amenable to her ideas.

Rand’s website touts “Check Please” as the “most popular one act play in the world” and the most produced high school play for many years.

The varied cast and short sequences — some very short — present their own challenges, however. Timing is especially important as actors enter and exit the stage and lighting is adjusted over various tables.

Cella isn’t the director, but is guiding student directors Layne Clark and Lily Marino, in addition to Baker and Lanfear.

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“Making sure everyone knew what they were doing, mainly lines, was the most challenging part of directing, but as the show grew closer, so did the confidence of everyone who was acting, which lightened the load,” Lanfear said. “With time you learn how each person operates and that makes it easier to understand them and together get things done.”

“Balancing the different aspects of directing was most difficult for me,” Baker added. “Of course, part of being a director is giving feedback and notes to the actors, but as a director you also need to make decisions about props, costumes, lighting, and set design. Both elements of directing are very important and finding out how to manage both was a bit challenging at first.”

“I love the idea of directing and I really liked the experience as well,” Marino said. “It really gives you creative liberty and I had a lot more fun than I thought I would.”

Curtain and Cue will stage an as yet undetermined musical in the spring, which Cella will direct. Recent productions have included “Anything Goes,” “Guys and Dolls,” “Hello Dolly,” “The Play That Goes Wrong” and “Rumors.”

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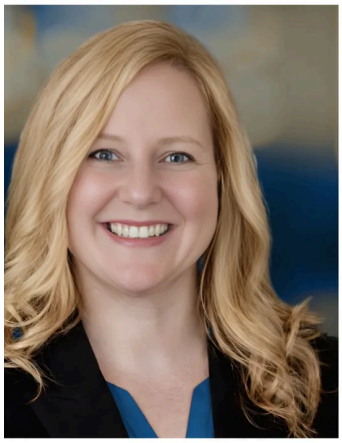

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## Rep. Michael Day helps House colleagues pass sweeping energy affordability bill

The following was submitted by the Office of Rep. Michael S. Day: Rep. Michael S. Day and his colleagues in the House of Representatives recently passed energy affordability legislation that would result in over $9 billion in savings for utility ratepayers over the next 10 years. The bill maintains critical

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## Winchester gun owners face new training rules starting April 2

Public safety data How Winchester compares on firearms licenses in comparable Massachusetts communities Active licenses

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The following was submitted by the Office of Sen. Jason Lewis: State Sen. Jason Lewis

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as of Jan. 25, 2025 — Source: Massachusetts Criminal History Systems Board License to carry firearms Firearms identification card Winchester and Marblehead are the focus communities. Peers selected based on comparable population size, demographics and suburban

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FEATURES

## ‘Chicago: Teen Edition’ dances onto the Winchester High School stage

By Talia Ho | Correspondent Fame. Fortune. And all that jazz. This spring, Winchester High School presents “Chicago: Teen Edition,” a bold musical that explores celebrity culture, media manipulation, and the cost of ambition. This iconic production is set in the 1920s. Performances will take place on March 13 and 14

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## Ripley Chapel in Winchester presents ‘Syldason: You Are Welcome Here’

The following was submitted by the Ripley Chapel at First Congregational Church: On Friday, March 13, beginning at 7:30 p.m., live in-person and live streamed from the stunning Ripley Chapel at First Congregational Church, Winchester, 21 Church St., join in with Syldason, a duo concert featuring Sylvie Zakarian,

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